

Action Minutes
WATER POLICY TASK FORCE
June 28, 2007
San Bernardino Conference Rooms

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1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Washburn at 10:11 a.m.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No members of the public spoke.

3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action minutes for the December 21, 2006, February 22, 2007 and April 26, 2007 meetings were approved by unanimous vote.

4.0 PRESENTATION ITEMS FOR THE TASK FORCE

4.1 Green Visions Plan

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Travis Longcore, Research Assistant Professor at USC and UCLA, updated the Task Force on the Green Visions Plan for Southern California watersheds in the 21st Century. This project is funded by a number of local agencies and state conservancies. The aim of this project is to create a data rich model that supports needs based open space decision making rather than the opportunity based approaches now being used. Another aim of the project is to highlight watershed areas that need greater attention, especially in protection and in restoring native biodiversity. The project's datasets are available online (www.greenvisionsplan.net) in a GIS system with various layers of information that are intended to aid this new approach to decision making.

4.2 Securing Southern California's Water Future

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Jeff Kightlinger, General Manager of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, briefed the Task Force on recent state action blocking water diversions to the California Aqueduct from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Rivers Delta and on the outlines of a new policy approach by which southern California might influence a long-term resolution of environmental, conveyance and water storage issues. He noted that the Colorado River Basin is in the 8th year of a serious drought. On the State Water Project that brings water from northern California, however, he noted that there was a different kind of drought, a regulatory drought driven by concerns about the endangerment of the Delta Smelt species. The threat of the Project pumps being forced to be shut down in order to protect the Smelt means that up to 30% of Metropolitan's State water supplies

could be lost. A federal judge in Fresno would be ruling on these issues in late August.

The impact of this expected change in pumping has led MWD to notify all of their agricultural water users that deliveries are likely to be cut in 2008 and 2009. This move reflects the priority MWD gives its municipal and industrial customers. Along with these moves the District is increasing its regional conservation efforts, along with its participation in short-term and long-term Bay Delta ecosystem planning and restoration. MWD hopes that there can be a comprehensive water solution for the Delta that will be ready for voter consideration on the November 2008 ballot. Leading up to this will be the recommendations of the Governor's Delta Vision Task Force upon which a comprehensive proposal can be built.

4.3 A New Water Management Initiative in the Santa Ana River Watershed 7

Celeste Cantu, General Manager of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, presented the goals of a new initiative recently formed in the Santa Ana River Watershed to advance integrated water management policy and practices and to improve this watershed's competition position to receive state and federal funding. Their initiative, "One Water One Watershed", seeks a watershed that is drought proofed, salt balanced in water quality, economically efficient and environmentally sustainable. The key will be a unified and integrated planning process that considers land uses, stormwater runoff, water supply, water quality, water recycling, habitat and natural areas, water conservation, climate change, environmental justice and parks and recreation.

Chairman Washburn moved that the Task Force recommend to the Energy and Environment Committee that SCAG support the "One Water One Watershed" initiative. The motion was seconded and adopted unanimously.

4.4 Legislative Report from Sacramento 9

Kathy Cole, Chief Lobbyist for Metropolitan Water District in Sacramento, briefed via videoconference the Task Force on pending legislation and other water issues of statewide and regional significance. This included bills concerned with regional planning, flood control, water supply, water conservation, water recycling and green building standards.

4.5 A Preferred Alternative for Restoration of the Salton Sea 10

Dale Hoffman-Floerke, Chief of the Colorado River and Salton Sea Office of the California Department of Water Resources, briefed the Task Force on the recently released Programmatic Environmental Impact Report prepared for the restoration of the Salton Sea. The report was released by Secretary for

Resources, Mike Chrisman, and proposed a preferred alternative for that restoration. The overall schedule for implementation is 75 years with an estimated cost of nearly \$9 billion. It was noted that a representative of the Salton Sea Authority would speak at the next meeting of the Energy and Environment Committee about this proposal.

5.0 CHAIR’S REPORT

The Chair reminded the Task Force that he has “Living Lightly” watershed guides from the Malibu Watershed available for interested Task Force members. He also indicated that staff would consult with Task Force members to select the most feasible date for the September meeting.

6.0 STAFF REPORT

There was no staff report.

7.0 TASK FORCE INFORMATION SHARING

There were no additional comments.

8.0 COMMENT PERIOD

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.